

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADJOURNMENT

ANNOUNCEMENT

Lamvohee, Mr Chenlye - passing away

PAPERS LAID

QUESTIONS (*Oral*)

(No. B/517) Registration, Inscription & Transcription Fees - rates

(No. B/518) Rivière Cocos - deep hole - safety measures

(No. B/519) RRA - personnel - recruitment

(No. B/520) Mauritius Judo Federation/Rodrigues Regional Judo
Committee - conflict

(No. B/521) Retailers - licenses

(No. B/522) Port Sud Est Coast - erosion

(No. B/523) Grand La Fouche Corail Road - hazards

(No. B/524) Morcellement Baie Malgache - road repairs

(No. B/525) Port Sector, Employees, Vacancies etc.

(No. B/526) Port Authority - RRA - agreement

(No. B/527) Residential Land Leases - transfer

(No. B/528) Clerk Of The Regional Assembly - expenditure -

renovation

(No. B/529) School Feeding Project - Budget 2004/2005

(No. B/530) Teachers/Senior Teachers - Advanced Certificate in
Education & Diploma Course

(No. B/531) Cadastral Dept. - Planning Unit

(No. B/532) Commissioner for Arts & Culture - Madagascar - visit

(No. B/533) Newborns - hospitals & health centres - death

(No. B/534) Taxi Permits - applications

(No. B/535) Rodriguan Professional Fishermen - St Brandon & St
Raphael

(No. B/536) Farmers - veterinary services

(No. B/537) Handball pitches - cost, date of construction, etc.

(No. B/538) Health Services - equipment

(No. B/539) Pharmaceutical Products - price

(No. B/540) Poultry Disease - outbreak

(No. B/541) "*Route de l'Autonomie*" - Baie Lascars/Mont Lubin -
pedestrian crossings

(No. B/542) Receptions, Cocktails etc. - detailed breakdown

(No. B/543) Rodrigues Football Team - setting up

(No. B/544) TV Emissions - interruption - 20.06.04

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

- (a) Registration & Transcription of Deeds & Inscription of Mortgages,
Privileges & Charges (Rodrigues) Act - amendment
- (b) Reflectorised Road Signs
- (c) Rodrigues Budget
- (d) Rodrigues Regional Assembly - public officers

ANNOUNCEMENT

LAMVOHEE, MR CHENLYE - PASSING AWAY

The Chief Commissioner: M. le président, nous avons appris avec beaucoup de peine la semaine dernière le décès de M. Chenlye Lamvohee, père du président de l'assemblée régionale de Rodrigues. Au nom des membres de l'assemblée et en mon nom personnel, je tiens, en cette occasion, à présenter au président de l'assemblée régionale ainsi qu'aux membres de sa famille et à ses parents affligés par ce deuil nos plus vives et sincères condoléances.

Mr J. Roussety: Je m'associe au Chef Commissaire dans le message de sympathie à M. le président de l'assemblée régionale. Au nom du parti de la minorité et en mon nom personnel, je présente nos condoléances à M. Lamvohee et à tous les membres de sa famille.

Mr Chairperson: I am really touched by these words. I wish to express my thanks to the Chief Commissioner and the members on the majority side, the Minority Leader and the members from the minority side. Thank you.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

REGISTRATION, INSCRIPTION & TRANSCRIPTION FEES - RATES

(No. B/517) Mr J.C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the registration, inscription and transcription fees in Rodrigues, he would state whether in the light of the forthcoming national budget, there was a proposed change in the rates of these fees and, if yes, what were they.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to PQ No. B/517, I should like to inform the Assembly that I shall make a statement later today to clarify the whole issue.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the amendment of the Registration and Classification and Inscription of Mortgages, Privileges and Charges (Rodrigues) Act, I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether he can intercede with the Minister of Finance before the Bill is voted in the National Assembly?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have said earlier, I will make a Statement later today to clarify the whole issue and the Members of the Assembly will be provided with all the information.

Mr Chairperson: The Chief Commissioner means that his statement will cover the subject matter of the question.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we would have appreciated if, at least, we could have the requested information to enable us to ask the relevant supplementary questions. The Chief Commissioner is referring to his Statement and we do hope that when he comes with same, we will have all the necessary information. It is unfortunate that we cannot put supplementary questions.

The Chief Commissioner: Sir, I think that the statement that I will make will clarify the whole issue and after that, members of the Regional Assembly can put questions. It can be discussed here, but I should like to ask hon. Members to take note of the Statement that I am going to make later on.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is surprising for us because we do not know exactly when Government will come with the Bill, but we do want to have our say before the Bill is voted. We will not be in a position to ask supplementary questions after the Chief Commissioner will make his statement.

The Chief Commissioner: I think it's good that we take note of the statement first.

Mr J. Roussety: With reference to Standing Order 15(2), may I propose that the Chief Commissioner comes forward with his Statement now. We suspend the Question Time, he makes his Statement so that we can have supplementary questions on this matter. We'll consider his statement as his reply and we'll have the opportunity to put questions on his

statement. The Statement is not to be included in Question Time. I am proposing this according to Standing Order 15(2) which states that -

"The Chairperson may allow the order of the business set out in the Order Paper to be altered at any particular sitting".

This is one possibility that can be done because he is having a statement, we would wish to have supplementary questions. This could be a solution.

Mr Chairperson: Suppose I do agree with you and allow the statement to be made by altering the order of business, still then you won't be able to ask supplementary questions because there has been no question, but a Statement. Then there will be the same sort of problem. Probably if you are not satisfied with the contents of the Statement, you can still come with notice of another question which deals with the subject, but which does not cover this question, of course.

Mr J. Roussety: Thank you. I do understand your position. May I, on this side of the House, kindly request Commissioners when they have questions to answer to avoid making reference to Statements. When we ask questions, we do not ask for statements, we ask for a reply after which we want to ask supplementary questions. This is our job and we are paid for that. We would highly appreciate that this practice is respected.

Mr Agathe: I want to add something, Mr Chairperson. I have asked a question today and for me it is one year...

Mr Chairperson: It is not one year. As the Chief Commissioner stated, his statement will include all the elements of answers to this question. Of course, if you want to put questions with a view to having supplementary questions, you cannot introduce new matters which are not contained in the main question. The same rule applies.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, may I ask the Chief Commissioner why he has not been able to come up with the statement today. Why is he coming later on? What are the reasons behind?

Mr Chairperson: This question is not allowed. We have dealt with this issue and I have given a ruling. Of course, you cannot expect me to force the Commissioner to answer questions now. That is his answer and

the Minority Leader has expressed a request which I can't reiterate, but of course, the information is shared between the members and the Commissioners. So, we move to the next question.

Mr Agathe: A last question. Can the Chief Commissioner say exactly when he will come with the statement?

Mr Chairperson: He is going to make the statement today. This is what I understand. Next question.

RIVIERE COCOS - DEEP HOLE - SAFETY MEASURES

(No. B/518) Mr J.C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the dangerous deep large hole dug by the Water Unit at Rivière Cocos (adjacent to Mr Ah Tone's house), he would state what safety measures are taken for the inhabitants living there.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the dug well at Rivière Cocos, I am informed that the well has been properly fenced and does not actually represent a danger to the inhabitants living there.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it seems that the Deputy Chief Commissioner has taken a temporary safety measure. Even if the place is fenced, it is still a threat for the inhabitants of Rivière Cocos. Can we know exactly what does the Deputy Chief Commissioner intend to do so that the deep large hole may not be a threat to the inhabitants?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the question is direct. It has been asked: what safety measures are taken for the inhabitants living there? The well has been fenced all around with fencing of about of six feet high with galvanised pipes and I visited the site personally and this hole does not represent a risk for the inhabitants living in that region.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner for how long has the work has been in progress?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do not have the information at hand, but I know that the hole has been surrounded by a fence and it does not represent a danger for the people living in the vicinity. I have already replied to the question.

Mr Agathe: Can the Deputy Chief Commissioner tell this Assembly what is the purpose of digging this hole?

Mr Chairperson: Well, this is far from the main question. The question is about safety measures.

Mr J. Roussety: Sir, I beg to disagree with the non-admissibility of that question because it is about a deep large hole dug by the Water Unit. So, because it is dangerous, deep, large and dug by the Water Unit, we want to know what is the purpose. I believe this is the objective. A dangerous deep large hole has been dug by the Water Unit, this is related...

Mr Chairperson: Can you take your seat. You seem not to agree with my ruling. Probably I did not express myself in so much clear terms. If you look at the questions, the question normally according to Standing Orders we have to state a title to the questions and then the questions are put. According to me the question is about safety measures. Of course, if you want to have more details, you are perfectly entitled to do so, but you need to give notice. If you do not give notice on the purpose of the hole, of course, you cannot expect Commissioners to give you a straightforward answer offhand. You have to couch your question so that it is apparent to the Commissioners if you want to have the purpose why the hole has been dug. This question is not allowed.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can we know whether there is a sort of opening or door in that fence?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: No, Mr Chairperson, Sir. The fence surrounds the well and there is a road which passes nearby; it represents no danger for people passing there.

Mr J. Roussety: Sir, there is a hole there representing a real danger, there is no door. In which country are we, Mr Chairperson, Sir? A hole is being dug and they fenced it. What is the reason for fencing a hole? Can

the Deputy Chief Commissioner tell us the reasons why this hole cannot be refilled immediately?

Mr Chairperson, Sir, if there is no door, it is fenced, it means that nobody will have access to it. It is a wastage; it will lead to stagnant water, there is a risk of proliferation of epidemics, mosquitoes etc. What is the purpose of having this hole? It has been fenced with Government materials and funds and there is no access to it.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Sir, the respected Member talks about a door. There is no door, but there is an entrance which has been left because there is also a garden near the dug well in the enclosed area by the fencing.

Mr J. Roussety: What is he saying? I am asking whether there is an opening or a door or something which has an access to that fenced area. He first said that there is no access and then he said that there is an entrance...

(Interruptions)

If there is an opening, there is a risk. Who uses that opening?

Mr Chairperson: The question is: who uses that opening that the Deputy Chief Commissioner just mentioned? I suppose that this is the question.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: There is a garden, the owner of the garden uses the opening.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Deputy Chief Commission talked about a well. Is it the purpose of his Commission to dig a well? Because nobody apart from him mentioned a well. He said that it is being used by the owner of the garden. Can I know from the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether it was the purpose of his Commission to dig a well for the owner of this garden?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this well was dug quite before it was decided to make tests on seawater interface at Rivière Cocos. As there is water in the well, it has been left so that planters can use it for agriculture.

Mr Jabeemissar: The Deputy Chief Commissioner has mentioned an entrance due to safety reasons. Can he state how the entrance is secured, so as not to allow anybody to have access to it? How is it secured? Is it locked?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is the owner of the garden who is responsible for the entrance, because his garden is in the enclosed area. Safety measures have been taken, so that the entrance does not fall just opposite the footpath.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Deputy Chief Commissioner say whether the whole responsibility of that well lies upon the owner of the garden or upon his Commission?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is another question. The question was about the safety measures taken. The Water Unit has already taken safety measures, the well has been enclosed, and now it is for the planter to take his responsibility while using the water in the well for his garden.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I don't understand clearly what the Deputy Chief Commissioner is saying. He said that there is a garden, a big hole and a footpath. Can he situate all these? Because the footpath goes through the garden just aside the big hole, and this is a danger. We know that children use that footpath to go on the other side of the river. Can he situate the river - he mentioned the garden - the footpath and the big hole? He said that there is a footpath, and now he says that the well is in the garden. Which is which?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is a footpath passing just aside the enclosed area. The well and the garden are found into the enclosed area.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Deputy Chief Commissioner just talked about the responsibility of the owner of the garden. Can I know whether other persons have access to what he calls the well?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: I will look into the matter, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, may I ask the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether he will consider, first, the possibility of securing that

hole, enclosing it completely, locking it, and then pump the water, put it in a tank, which will then be distributed to the planters? This would be the best practice. Of course, we know who is governing this island!

Mr Chairperson: The purport of supplementary questions have been deviated a little bit from the main question. This is the last question that I will allow on the well.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is another question. We will look into the matter. As I said, safety measures have already been taken all around the well.

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY – PERSONNEL - RECRUITMENT

(No. B/519) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Chief Commissioner –

- (a) what was the problem faced by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly lately to recruit personnel, and
- (b) whether this problem had been resolved and personnel, particularly for the Secretariat of the Assembly in terms of Reporters, will be recruited in the financial year 2004/2005.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I shall make a statement later today on the problem...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order, please!

(Interruptions)

Order, please! The Chief Commissioner was on his feet in the process of answering a question. There have been interruptions from the whole front bench from the Minority side. I am not going to tolerate this any more, and I will take sanctions if ever this happens again. This applies to any Member who is on his feet.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, thank you.

Mr Chairperson: Please wait! Can the Chief Commissioner proceed? Then, if the Minority Leader wishes to raise a point of order, he will be able to proceed.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I shall make a statement later, today, on the problem which is being encountered by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the recruitment of staff.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards the posts of trainee reporters and reporters, no recruitment has been possible because of the dearth of qualified candidates with shorthand skills in Rodrigues.

On the basis of the revised scheme of service for Mauritius, prescribed on 23 March 2004, a fresh proposed scheme of service for the trainee grade for Rodrigues is being framed.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner has talked about non-availability of qualified staff from Rodrigues. Does it mean that, if we don't have qualified staff here, we cannot look for staff from abroad, be it from mainland Mauritius? Can he state the reasons why recruitment has not been done from Mauritius?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Clerk of the National Assembly in Mauritius has not been able to entertain our request to have, at least, one experienced Reporter posted to Rodrigues. Meanwhile, the Confidential Clerk and the Word-processing Operator posted to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly are being paid *ad hoc* allowances of Rs1,000 monthly for performing part of the duties of Reporters until the vacancies are filled.

Two officers transcribe the Assembly's proceedings and the recorded part is done by the staff of the National Assembly. As I said in the second part of my reply, there is a question of shorthand skills and that is why the revised scheme of service for Mauritius prescribed on 23 March 2004 is proposing a fresh scheme of service for the trainee grade for Rodrigues, so that our Reporters here can enter easily in this grade.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I know that it is better to give more chance to those from Rodrigues. But, is the Chief Commissioner aware that, because of the lack of this type of personnel, the work of Members of this Assembly has become very, very difficult? We have not been able to get the answers to questions that have been asked here since one

year. This cannot be tolerated any longer, Mr Chairperson, Sir. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether there have been requests from people from Mauritius, holding the required qualifications, to come and work here?

Mr Chairperson: This applies to the Clerk and me as well.

The Chief Commissioner: As I said in my reply to a supplementary question, Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have made requests to the National Assembly of Mauritius to have someone here until we recruit new Reporters with new schemes of service. The Clerk of the National Assembly in Mauritius has not been able to entertain our request to have, at least, one experienced Reporter posted to Rodrigues.

Mrs Meunier: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Chief Commissioner whether anyone from Rodrigues is being trained in that field, so that we no longer have this problem? The Clerk of the National Assembly has not been able to attend to our request. When will we have this person if nobody is being trained from Rodrigues? Is there somebody being trained at the moment?

The Chief Commissioner: As far as shorthand is concerned, I will have to find out whether there are still institutes in Mauritius for training in that field. This is the problem. That is why they are working out a new framework for Rodrigues. When our Reporters will be recruited, they will be sent to Mauritius for training. There will be two Reporters.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the staff of the Assembly falls under the responsibility of the Clerk. I would like to know whether the Island Chief Executive, who falls under the Office of the Chief Commissioner, has any say in recruitment at the level of the Assembly here.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, usually, the Budget is being discussed with the staff of the Assembly, especially the Clerk who has twice attended meetings, chaired by me. Every submission was put before us, and that is why we have come to an agreement as to the number of Reporters to be recruited and the kind of training that is going to be given to them after their recruitment.

Mr J. Roussety: Has the Chief Commissioner been apprised of the problem of lack of Reporters, especially as far as the proper running of the Assembly is concerned?

The Chief Commissioner: We have already discussed with the Clerk of the Assembly on that matter. We are aware of the problems. Even now, with the PRB Report, there is a lot of change in the scheme of service. Unfortunately, it is like that. That's why I will come with a statement later on, to explain exactly the problem of the Rodrigues Civil Establishment Order. This has taken a certain time and has been voted in the National Assembly. We are aware of that, and we are going to solve the problem.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is nearly two years now that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has been set up. According to me, it is a matter of urgency for the smooth running of the Assembly. I don't understand why this has taken so long, and now the Chief Commissioner is saying that he will see whether the possibility for training in shorthand exists in Mauritius. Can I ask the Chief Commissioner why it has taken so long? We understand that it has not been possible to have staff with the Clerk of the National Assembly. But, when he says that now he will see whether this possibility exists, can we know why it has taken so long?

The Chief Commissioner: I said that this was discussed. Even last year, this was discussed when we prepared the Budget. I must talk with either the Clerk of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly or the Chairperson or the Clerk of the National Assembly as to whether training in shorthand is still ongoing in Mauritius in certain institutes. This is the problem, and that's why we are waiting for this new framework for Reporters in Mauritius. I don't exactly know whether new Reporters in Mauritius have training in shorthand. I must find out, because I don't want to reply like that. I have been told that, in the past, we had some problems to recruit and to send people to Mauritius to be trained. It seems that now we are going ahead to solve the problem.

MAURITIUS JUDO FEDERATION/RODRIGUES REGIONAL JUDO COMMITTEE - CONFLICT

(No. B/520) Mr J. C. Agathe (Second Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner of Youth & Sports whether he would—

- (a) table the letter he received from the Mauritius Judo Federation stating that they are no longer going to deal with the Rodrigues Regional Judo Committee, and

(b) state what is the nature of the conflicts he referred to.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the letter is being tabled and the nature of the complaint is as specified in the letter.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can we take cognizance of the letter?

Mr Chairperson: Of course! Let the Clerk receive it at the Table first. I will allow the Member one minute to take cognizance of the letter and then we will proceed.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I see that reference is made to a letter sent by someone known as John Milazar and this is why there has been a conflict. Could the Commissioner state whether the conflict is with the Rodrigues Regional Judo Club or with Mr John Milazar?

Mr Chairperson: The Member should table the letter so that at least the Chairperson may know the purport of the question. The letter concerns the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if we look at the whole matter, the regional committee normally is under the purview of federations. So, if the federation has written to me saying that because of such a problem they are not going to deal with the regional committee, this means that there is a conflict that has to be solved before the federation proceeds with the regional committee.

Mrs Meunier: Could the Commissioner tell us whether he is aware of the nature of the conflict and what he has done at the level of his Commission to look into that matter?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we all know what was the problem that occurred at the Judo Committee. I think every Member in this Assembly does know about it. There have been frictions between two groups which have somehow led to a problem at the Judo Committee. My view about this is that it would be for the benefit of the judo family that everybody be on board for the progress of that discipline.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that there has been a case before the Court of Justice in order that Messrs John Milazar and Kenneth Mercure be elected to judo?

Mr Chairperson: The Member means that there was a case in court?

Mr Agathe: Yes.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, I am well aware of that case. As per the letter given by the Judo Federation, I have nothing to do with the case nor do I have anything to say about it. We all know that the outcome of the case was in favour of Mr Kenneth Mercure, but still, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the letter was written by the federation and we all know that regional committees have to answer to judo federations in Mauritius.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the case, the Commissioner said that the Court was in favour of Mr Kenneth Mercure. We all know that Mr K. Mercure is the right person to chair the Judo Federation in Rodrigues.

Mr Chairperson: This is the decision of the Court. Is that what you mean?

Mr Agathe: Yes, Mr Chairperson. Now, as I read the letter, I see that it refers to John Milazar. Comment se fait-il que maintenant que gain de cause a été donné à Mons. Kenneth Mercure, Mons. Milazar écrit à nouveau une lettre à la fédération pour dire qu'il a des problèmes à la fédération de judo ?

Mr Chairperson: Can the Member be more specific as to whether the letter or the press conference was after the court case or before? The Member has to be clear.

Mr Agathe: *It was after.* Et ce n'est que maintenant qu'on prend en considération ce cas.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if Mr Kenneth Mercure feels that his right has been violated, I would invite him to take the matter up with the federation, as a member of the regional committee.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we know that all activities related to judo in Rodrigues were frozen for several months in the past. There has been a case before a court of justice and the court has come up with a judgement. We all know that our judokas do well in Rodrigues. The fact was proved during the last *Jeux des Iles de l'Océan Indien*.

Can I know from the Commissioner for Sports what is being done at the level of his Commission in order to avoid these problems and to strengthen things as far as judo is concerned so that our judokas get normal training and that we represent the Republic of Mauritius in different activities locally, regionally or internationally?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I remember that last time I came up with a statement wherein I related all the activities that have been organised by my Commission. In fact, we organised a fun run before the Indian Islands Games. We also organised many activities for the *Ecole de Judo* and all clubs in Rodrigues in collaboration with the coach at the level of my Commission.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it would seem that conflicts still persist as far as judo is concerned. The Commissioner used the word 'frictions' to talk about the conflicts between two groups of persons. May we know what is being done to consolidate the judo family in Rodrigues? It is not merely a question of listing the activities done by his Commission, but as far as judo, itself, is concerned, surely something must be done.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I stated before, I think that the best solution that we can have so far with regard to this matter of conflict, is that everybody be on board for the progress of judo. In my opinion, if we really want judo to progress, we should move towards a new election where we have a new committee, everybody is on board, every member and a representative of each club be represented on this committee. I think this is the best solution.

Mr Agathe: M. le président, je voudrais demander au Commissaire si c'est une pratique courante dans sa Commission de travailler avec quelqu'un qui a été debouté en cour suprême au lieu de travailler avec quelqu'un qui est reconnu par la fédération pour promouvoir le judo à Rodrigues?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have stated that I am working with the coach who is attached to my Commission.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner was just talking about what according to him would be the best solution for judo. Can I ask him whether actions have been taken towards the best solution that he mentioned?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, at present, I am very happy to say that in Rodrigues we have about 250 judokas who are affiliated to the judo federation now. I think this is the first step towards a new election, so that when we are going to have a new general assembly for a new election we have judokas who are affiliated to the federation.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, may we know to which extent the Commissioner poked his nose into the matters of this federation?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have to be very careful about this, because this may tantamount to say that there is *ingérence politique*. I would rather leave that matter between the regional committees and federation and wait for a possible solution.

RETAILERS - LICENCES

(No. B/521) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Commissioner for Trade as regards licences for general retailer, consolidated retailer, if any, retailer of tobacco and restaurant, whether he would inform the House about –

- (a) the administrative procedures now in force for the payment of fees for the above licences, and
- (b) the effective date of the coming into operation of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Licences) Regulations 2003 given that these regulations do not mention any date.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to part (a) of the question, I have been informed that any person who has to pay fees for renewal or a new licence should call at the licensing office where a combined remittance voucher is issued to him for payment at the cash office.

The receipt obtained is then submitted to the licensing office for the issue or renewal of a licence.

With regard to part (b), the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Licences) Regulations were passed on 12 October 2003 and published in the Gazette on 24 October 2003. The new regulations are being applied as from 01 July 2004.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner say which regulations are being applied now, i.e. up to 01 July 2004? Is it the first regulation of the RRA Regulations (Licences) 2002 or the Regulation which were in force prior to that?

Mr Lisette: It is the regulations of 2002.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, may we know whether the licence fee that the public is paying is in accordance to what was voted in 2003?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if we want to look at this problem, we should see what is written in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act. It is stated that fees, have to be paid from 01 July of the financial year to 31 June of the next financial year. So, we have applied the regulation 2002 in 2003 as from 01 July; this means that it has to be applied up to June 2004.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner stated that the 2003 Regulations were passed on 03 October 2003, were gazetted on 24 October 2003 and are subject to come into force on 01 July 2004, that is, in three days.

(Interruptions)

So, it does not mean that those who have paid before should pay the fees which will come into force after 01 July 2004. Has this been the case? Has his Commission charged the licensees the fees payable from 01 July 2004 to 30 June 2005?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we are proceeding now with the renewal of licences and anybody who is coming for a new licence will have to abide to the regulations of 2003 as from 01 July 2004.

Mr J. Roussety: As from 01 July, Mr Chairperson, Sir. But my question is: whether the new fees have been applied before today?

Mr Lisette: So far, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the answer is ‘no’.

Mr J. Roussety: So, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this means that the fees are going to rise again, because we have voted two Regulations, one in 2002 and another one in 2003; and there have been increases in these. Will the Commissioner confirm that as from 01 July 2004, these fees are going to increase again?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that the Minority Leader is getting confused. The Regulations that were passed in 2002 were applied from 01 July 2003 to June 2004.

The Regulations that were passed last year – in 2003 – will be applied as from 01 July 2004.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there has been an increase lately. Those who have gone to pay their licences have had to pay an increase in the fee. May we know whether the increase was for the period 01 July 2003 and 30 June 2004?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, normally the renewal of a licence takes place on 01 July or 01 January. So, those who have gone to the Commission for the renewal of a licence during that period of time we are applying the new licences Regulations 2004.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards licences for “consolidated retailer”, can the Commissioner say how are these being applied according to the Regulations now in force?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think that for a “consolidated retailer”, there is a specific regulation that is applied for that particular activity.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner say whether these regulations were passed in this House and, if so, when? And

how is he going to apply them if they have not been passed in this House yet?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have to be very careful. If we look at the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, it is clearly stated that those activities which are listed in the Schedule of the Local Government Act should be applied if a person is having the licence for this activity. The permit for “consolidated retailer” does not appear under the new Regulations 2003 nor in the Schedule of the Local Government Act.

Mr Chairperson: This does not relate to the main question. The Member can reformulate his question if he wishes, but as it is, it is not admissible.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner said that "consolidated retailer" is not in the Schedule of the Local Government Act. We had "consolidated retailer" here. Being given that there is no more "consolidated retailer", this is the case.

(Interruptions)

This is what he said.

Mr Chairperson: This is an affirmation on your part.

Mr Agathe: No, he said that.

Mr Chairperson: I see. Anyway, there is a question from the Minority Leader. Ask your question, please!

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I heard that "consolidated retailer" is not in the Schedule to the Local Government Act. Is this what the Commissioner said?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I said that consolidated retailer does not appear as such appellation under the new Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Licences) Regulations 2003. This is what I said.

Mr J. Roussety: Can we know why, Mr Chairperson, Sir?

Mr Lisette: As I said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, "consolidated retailer" is dealt with in another specific Regulation and this is normally dealt with by the Magistrate at the Court Office.

Mr J. Roussety: What is this specific Regulation, Mr Chairperson, Sir?

Mr Lisette: I think it is the Rodrigues Regulations 1921.

Mr J. Roussety: Will we have specific regulations for "consolidated retailer"?

(Interruptions)

Is this what he wants to say?

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: There is a question, please!

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if it is not listed under these Regulations, this means that it should be somewhere in other Regulations and normally we do apply these Regulations.

Mr J. Roussety: But, Mr Chairperson, Sir, what is the purpose of having Regulations specifically for "consolidated retailer" when it can be included in the whole list of licences?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, before we can include that particular item under the Rodrigues Regulations, we should see what the Act says. This is very important.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, until this team looks into this problem, what is happening to the "consolidated retailer" licence? Is it being renewed and, if no, what is going on? How are these persons going to work?

Mr Lisette: As I said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is being dealt with by the Magistrate at the Court Office.

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is being dealt with, it will be done soon, etc., but what is being done, derogation or whatever, for them to be able to work? Because they cannot work without a licence.

Mr Chairperson: I listened to your question as to whether the Court Office is still delivering the licence for "consolidated retailer". Is that your question?

Mr J. Roussety: He said that there is a problem with "consolidated retailer".

Mr Lisette: I did not say that there is a problem with "consolidated retailer".

Mr J. Roussety: So, is the permit still being delivered?

Mr Lisette: I have said, it is dealt with by the Magistrate, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order!

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I will table a copy of a licence...

Mr Chairperson: Do not table, but say it in words.

Mr Jabeemissar: For "consolidated retailers", the person has paid, as from 01 January 2004 up to 30 June 2004, for this half yearly fees, Rs242 and this does not appear anywhere in the two Regulations which have been voted. How is it that his Commission accept fees from people who already hold licences and where nothing is to be found concerning these Regulations? Is he doing this in conformity with the law and which law is it?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think we have come into the legal aspect of the matter, but I would just comment on this. The "consolidated retailer" that the respected Member is referring to, appears under the 1921 Rodrigues Regulations. And within that Regulation, it is specified that the Island Secretary, before the coming into force of the Rodrigues Regional

Assembly Act, had vested power for appointing any fee with respect to any activity. I think that the Rs242, as mentioned in this licence, refer to that section of the Regulations.

Mr J. Roussety: M. le président, la loi sur l'Assemblée régionale date de 2001. M. le Commissaire parle d'une loi qui date de 1921. Personne ici n'était là. Est-ce que le Commissaire ne considère pas qu'une loi de 2001 votée par l'Assemblée Nationale à l'unanimité et qui autorise l'Assemblée régionale à faire ses propres licences, n'abroge pas une *regulation made by the Island Secretary in 1921*? *Is this not just a matter of administration and delaying tactics that they are using in order not to solve that problem?* Parce que la loi sur l'Assemblée régionale est supérieure à cette réglementation et c'est ainsi qu'il faut l'interpréter. Il faudrait voir comment on va aider ces gens là. Je voudrais demander une chose. *I would like to ask the Commissioner to table the licences per item before the 2002 licences, together with the licences in 2003. Will he please table the licences, the amount which was voted...*

Mr Chairperson: Does the Member mean the fees?

Mr J. Roussety: Yes, will he table the fees before the setting up of the RRA, the fees voted for the first set of licences and the fees for the second?

Mr Chairperson: Yes, this question refers to the Regulations that have been published officially in the Government Gazette. Well, it is not allowed as such, but if you want to ask the questions, as to the fees the Commission is applying now, this will be correct, but you want to know the terms in a regulation. Of course, this won't be allowed.

Mr J. Roussety: We don't have the previous fees.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, it is in the Regulations, in the law books, but you can ask him that. If it is in the law books, you can't...

Mr J. Roussety: We don't have them in the law books. Even in the House here we don't have them.

Mr Chairperson: You can ask about the fees he is applying now, but you cannot say directly what the law provides.

Mr J. Roussety: My purpose, Mr Chairperson, Sir, ...

Mr Chairperson: I understood your purpose.

Mr J. Roussety: My purpose is for the sake of comparison.

Mr Chairperson: Let us see whether we have any response from the Commissioner for Youth and Sports.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, since I assumed office, I have the 2002 and 2003 Regulations and the fees that are being applied.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner inform the House about the scope of activities for those holding a consolidated licence?

Mr Lisette: If we want to have the scope of activities for "consolidated retailer", we have to refer to the 1921 Regulation as it is stipulated there.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, has the Commissioner ever seen the Regulation of 1921? He said that it is a regulation from the Island Secretary.

Mr Lisette: The 1921 Regulation is found in the book of law, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr J. Roussety: Has the Commissioner seen it?

Mr Lisette: Of course, I have seen it.

Mr Chairperson: Well, the Member wants to insist on the question. He must let the Commissioner take his standing position and answer or if he doesn't insist on that...

Mr Lisette: As I said, he must do his homework, he must go through the books of law and find the Regulation of 1921.

(Interruptions)

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am sure that when Regulations are made, first of all, those who prepare them have in mind those people concerned and when we talk about licence fees for "consolidated retailer", it does not mean only these people, but consumers as well. Can the Commissioner say whether he has referred to these old Regulations when he prepared the Regulations which will now come into force, and if so, what has he put in the Regulations which will come into force lately concerning those already holding a "consolidated retailer" licence?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if we refer to the RRA Act, we are allowed to make Regulations under a specific Act. We have to refer to activities which are referred to under the Eighth Schedule of the Local Government Act. So, when I made my Regulations, it is there that I referred because it gives the power to make regulations under this particular Act.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am of the opinion that the RRA Act supersedes the administrative Regulations made in 1921. Will the Commissioner seek legal advice about this matter as to whether the RRA Act can be applied? We forget about this 1921 Regulation. Will he seek legal advice on that?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I'll seek advice on that.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in two days' time the person I have just mentioned earlier, will find his licence expired. He will have to renew it. Under which regulation will the owner of this licence be charged? How will he be charged? What fees is he going to pay in two days or three days' time when he goes to renew his licence?

Mr Lisette: As I said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this licence has been given by the Magistrate under 1921 Regulations. So, when he is going to renew his licence, it would be under this Regulation.

Mr J. Roussety: So, the fee, Mr Chairperson, Sir, has to be paid to the Court.

Mr Chairperson: What is the question of the Member?

Mr J. Roussety: The Commissioner said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that this licence has been delivered by the Magistrate. Where will these persons go to pay their licences? At the Government Cash Office or at the Court of Rodrigues?

Mr Lisette: Normally, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for renewal of licence it is done at the Cash Office.

Mr J. Roussety: Therefore, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for a licence for which his Commission is not responsible, but it cashes the money, is it a good practice?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, even before the coming of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, these licences were being paid at the Cash Office. So, I think it is still a good practice.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there are things which are not clear. Concerning the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Regulations 2003, there are several measures, for example, retailer of beer, cider, ale and so on, on and off. I think this concerns people holding “consolidated retailer” licence. Now, according to the Commissioner, this type of licence will be charged according to the old Regulations and then will be charged on several items according to the new Regulations which will come into force shortly. Which is which? Because if these people are selling beer, ale and so on, they will be charged Rs2,000. Is there any regulation which has been made. Which is which?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, if the licence is “consolidated retailer”, I have said, we are referring to a 1921 Regulations. We are going to apply the fees for 1921 Regulations.

(Interruptions)

unless and until we amend it so that this is covered by...

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards the licences for general retailer, consolidated retailer, etc and as far as administrative procedures are concerned, is it true - we have heard of it we want to confirm - that when the applicant each year renews his or her licence must go back again with all the procedures, that is, having the authorisation of the Police, the fire services, the sanitary services, etc. Should that person repeat all these

procedures every year? Or is it once and for all when the licence is applied? Because, in the past, the practice has been that it is only once, namely when the person applies. Is it true that every year, or every time a person applies for renewal of his licence, he will have to go through these procedures?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, right now, because we are applying a new regulation, every person, who is renewing his licence, was to go through all the procedures mentioned by the Minority Leader. This is very important, because we are computerising our system at the Commission. But I should also say that for some activities it is very important that we go through these procedures. I'll explain. If we take the case of a restaurant. I give a licence today and this licence has been given with a particular sanitary condition which is according to norms. If next year, his licence is renewed without any check, it may happen that his restaurant has decreased in its hygienic condition. So, it is very important that there are checks being done by the sanitary division and this is done for safety purposes, Mr Chairperson, Sir. It is done for the safety of the public, and this is very important.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the measures mentioned by the Commissioner are correct. But should this not be the day-to-day affairs of the sanitary inspectors who have to monitor that the restaurant is working according to norms? And when the person comes, he has in hand the report. Why is it that the person must go and seek authorisation from sanitary inspectors who come to inspect and then he is given the licence? This is too much burden on the shoulders of these people.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, regular inspection is done right now. This is very important. But I should say that, with the computerisation of our system now, whenever the expiry date of the licence will be coming into effect, ultimately the sanitary office and other authorities will go and crosscheck the premises to see whether it is according to the Food Act or to the Public Safety Act.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner says that they will know according to their computerised system when the licence is going to expire. Mr Chairperson, Sir, do the sanitary services have enough resources to go each year at the end of 31st June? There are thousands of licences. Will that be practicable? Mr Chairperson, Sir, being given the staff and the logistic of the fire services, the Police, etc., will it not have a

delaying and extremely discouraging effect on commerce and trade in the island?

Mr Lisette: I don't think so, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I have said two things. Regular checks are being done by the inspectorate; secondly, once the system is computerised, we will know from our list that there are so many restaurants and in so much time we can do the inspection. Mr Chairperson, Sir, this can be done before 01 July. Once the 01 July is reached, the licence is delivered according to the report sent by the sanitary officers.

Mr J. Roussety: I don't know how many personnel there are at the sanitary services. Mr Chairperson, Sir, one last question from my part on this matter. I would like the Commissioner to be clear on that. Will licensees have to go each year through these administrative procedures of having authorisation from different services to have their licence?

Mr Lisette: As I have said, Mr Chairperson, Sir, for some activities where inspections are important, this will be done. As I have said before, for some licences, especially where food are being processed and sold, on the basis of hygienic conditions, Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is very important that we have a report from the sanitary office.

Mr Chairperson: Next question, please!

PORT SUD EST COAST - EROSION

(No. B/522) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, owing to the highly eroded state of the coast at Port Sud Est (in front of Hermitage Night Club), he would say if there was any immediate project to counteract the effect of erosion there, and if yes, when.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in line with our policy to embellish the environment and provide basic amenities to fishermen, the Executive Council has decided to construct small marinas at Port Sud Est and Rivière Cocos to provide safe and adequate mooring facilities for fishing boats as well as shipways for the landing of boats. Bands, which will surround the marina on the three sides, will shelter the boats from rough sea conditions while dredged materials will be utilised to

rehabilitate the coastal zone which will also be protected from further erosion.

The bands to be constructed with gabions and stone walls will be large enough to be used as a promenade along the seafront. Other facilities that will be provided will include proper toilet facilities, shelter for the sale of fish and storage facilities for fishermen to keep their equipment. I discussed the project during the site meeting with fishermen at Port Sud Est and fishermen at stations on 19 May 2004 and they confirmed their agreement to the proposal. In Mauritius, it has been generously accepted to prepare the concept and design of the project and the environment impact assessment study for the marina project of Port Sud Est free of charge. We had a meeting with representatives of the consultants on 17 April 2004 to discuss the preliminary design.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I thank the Chief Commissioner for having already looked into that matter. But can he say when the project will start?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we cannot say when we are going to start the project. We are awaiting the EIA report and the technical design. When we receive the design, we will see when we can start and there is also the question of machines. We are going to have the collaboration of the fishermen also so that it can be a participating project from the part of the fishermen.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, my main concern here is the eroded state of the coast. The Chief Commissioner has in mind the construction of a marina and so on. Can temporary measures be taken? He mentioned some measures like using soil to fill the part of the coast. Can't these be done in the first hand before the construction project of the marina starts?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is the whole project so that there can be no more coastal erosion. We cannot start piecemeal. There is a whole design of the project and we are waiting for gabions from Mauritius. We cannot do things piecemeal.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Chief Commissioner say whether he is aware that there are other coastal parts of Rodrigues.....

(Interruptions)

There are similar cases in other parts of Rodrigues which need to be dealt with especially where there are strong waves causing much damage to the coast. Is he prepared to undertake a study to see which other coast needs to be restored like Port Sud Est?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is another question, I would like to ask the respected Member to come with a substantive question to which I will reply. But I must say that there have been studies concerning the coastal erosion and there will be also a study on coastal management. All the reports on coastal erosion have been submitted. The sub committee and the environment committee are studying these reports and action will be taken in consultation with the Ministry of Environment. We had, some few days ago, the visit of the Director of the Environment, Mr Prayag. He has offered his services freely to help us to solve the problem of coastal erosion.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner is talking about not to do it piecemeal and to take the whole project. I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that in a very recent past, the coast of Port Sud Est was a very sandy one. Everyone here can recall. The Chief Commissioner was talking about consultancy in Mauritius, design for marinas and things like that. Maybe it is not Mauritius, but he was talking about consultancy, design, etc. We all know that this takes time. In the meantime, this coast is highly eroded. I personally know that, as from the construction of the jetty, the erosion of this part of the beach started around 1983/84. Has the Chief Commissioner taken any decision as far as this stone wall is concerned?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there will be an impact assessment study on the whole issue; and we are all aware of the erosion of the Port Sud Est shore, that is why there will be an impact assessment study. This is, according to us, very important. We are awaiting the report and then we will take action. Whenever we receive the impact assessment report, we will go ahead with the project.

GRAND LA FOUCHE CORAIL ROAD - HAZARDS

(No. B/523) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner as regards the accumulation of rainwater on one side of the road at Grand La Fouche Corail, next to Welcome Industries and the road junction, which constitutes a hazard to road users, whether immediate action would be taken in order to remedy same and if yes, when.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the accumulation of rainwater on one side of the road at Grand La Fouche Corail, next to Welcome Industries and the road junction, I am informed that the Public Infrastructure Commission is initiating action for the enlargement of the road reserve to accommodate a footpath and a drain. The Cadastral Unit has been requested to look at the possibility of resuming part of the land that has been leased and necessary action will be taken after all clearances have been obtained by the Cadastral Unit.

MORCELLEMENT BAIE MALGACHE – ROAD REPAIRS

(No. B/524) Mr G. Jabeemissar (Second Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards rainwater problems in Morcellement Baie Malgache next to Mr Albert's and Mr Leste's homes which caused constant damage to the main road not far from the Fish Landing Station, he would state –

- (a) if drains will be constructed to prevent flooding of the road, and
- (b) if a proper tarred access road or alternatively track roads could be provided and, if not, why.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform this House that, with regard to water problems at *morcellement* Baie Malgache that the matter is being studied by the Public Infrastructure Commission and a cost estimate of constructing a proper drain network and a proper road network within the *morcellement* will be looked into. The different type of roads will be considered and a decision taken in the light of the cost estimate of each alternative. An item for infrastructure to existing *morcellement* has been created. The above will be considered during the

next financial year subject to funds being made available. Meanwhile I have directed my Commission to take temporary remedial measures by repairing the main road and diverting the run-off.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the problem I mentioned here concerning *morcellement* Baie Malgache, also applies to the whole coast from Diamant to Baie Malgache, but I mentioned only one particular place. One can see that the whole road along the coast of Baie Malgache is in a very bad state. Will the Deputy Chief Commissioner consider it as a matter of urgency by having the workers of his Commission repair it as soon as possible? Because day after day the situation is becoming worse.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, they have already taken note of the situation and in the Public Infrastructure Commission we have a group of workers dealing with road works. We have taken a decision to carry out works on the coast from Baie Malgache to Pointe La Gueule. It is included in our scope of work and it will be done as soon as possible.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the programme has existed for a long time, well before the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner why is it only now that actions are being taken to remedy the problem caused to water in that *morcellement* and that part of the road?

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have had several complaints after the setting up of the *morcellement*. It is now that we are having complaints; we will do the needful so as to have regular visits on that part of the road and to take necessary measures to have the road in a proper state for road users.

PORT SECTOR, EMPLOYEES, VACANCIES ETC.

(No. B/525) Mr F. Grandcourt (The First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the staff working in the port sector (Marine Services) in Rodrigues, he could state -

- (a) the number of Government employees working there per category and table a list thereof, and
- (b) the number of vacancies in the port sector per category.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am tabling a list indicating the details sought in both parts (a) and (b) of the question. **(Appendix A)**

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to the paper the Chief Commissioner has just tabled, we see that there are 29 vacant posts for deckhand. Can we know when will these posts be filled first and why is it that there are so many vacancies in that sector?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, for the time being, the present staff in post deals only with **loading and unloading** of vessels and is sufficient to cope with such limited activities. The situation may be reviewed in due course, taking into consideration the rules and regulations of the World Trade Organisation, the International Maritime Organisation and new developments in the port.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we see that there are 5 crane drivers. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether they work permanently in the port or do they work on shift when there is no ship in the harbour?

The Chief Commissioner: The marine service does not have a crane, that's why most of the personnel are around the terminal building. As I said, the number of staff in post presently is sufficient to deal with the kind of work which the marine service is doing in the port. If in the future all regulations of the World Trade Organisation and the International Maritime Organisation are applied to Rodrigues concerning the gas, the situation may be reviewed. There is also the fact that we would be needing much space to store gas cylinders for one month instead of having gas imported from Mauritius at every trip, because many of the rules of the WTO and International Marine Rules are being applied. In the future, we are looking forward for the new development of the port; probably we will need many more workers and that's why we have kept the number of posts here. We have not abolished the number of posts, whilst in the future we can employ people to fill those posts according to the new development of the port.

PORT AUTHORITY – RRA – AGREEMENT

(No. B/526) Mr F. Grandcourt (The First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the management of the port in Rodrigues, he could state

- (a) if there has been any agreement between the Port Authority and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly or the Ministry for Rodrigues, and if yes, and
- (b)(i) give the exact date the agreement was signed, and
(ii) table a copy of this agreement.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, no agreement has been signed between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the Mauritius Port Authority with regard to the management of the port in Rodrigues. However, the Technical Management of Port Mathurin rests with the Mauritius Ports Authority in accordance to the Ports Act, while it has been agreed through administrative arrangement that the day-to-day administration of the port will remain under the responsibility of the Rodrigues administration.

The administrative arrangements between the Ministry for Rodrigues at that time and the Mauritius Ports Authority were reached prior to the coming into force of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and are still in force. The necessity of signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mauritius Ports Authority is being looked into in the light of coming development to be undertaken in the port. All staff working in the marine services for Rodrigues are employees of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly; and all tugs and equipment to run and operate the port are provided by the Mauritius Ports Authority.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, according to the reply of the Chief Commissioner, the equipment belong to the Port Authority, but the drivers and the staff work under the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. There is something which is not correct. I would like to ask the Chief Commissioner whether there has been any agreement? Because as such, I think it is incorrect. What about their safety? Do they receive any allowance from the Port Authority to work on these machines, for example?

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is nothing abnormal in this kind of situation. According to the Ports Act, the technical management of the port of Port Mathurin falls under the Mauritius Ports Authority and the workers here have to follow all the security measures according to port regulations. They have all their security and if they don't have this, I will find out; and there is no anomaly in this kind of situation, but what will put things correct is this Memorandum of the Understanding. We have started to discuss with the Mauritius Ports Authority concerning this Memorandum of Understanding. And when we have discussions with the *Banque Européenne d'Investissement*, we were just talking about all that: who is going to finance the development of the Port; who is going to manage the port. According the RRA Act, we are responsible for the management of the port, that means the administration of the port. I think that this kind of cooperation is good because sometimes the development of the port needs a lot of money, a lot of technical experience. We don't have this technical experience. A new tug will cost us about Rs200 m. or Rs300 m. But I must say that we have discussed this situation with the Mauritius Ports Authority during the past months and a Memorandum of Understanding is being looked into and prepared so that we can put things correct concerning the Port of Rodrigues, the employees and the Mauritius Ports Authority. Now, let's give some more information. If the Mauritius Ports Authority will apply all the regulations, it means fees concerning the port in Mauritius, this will not be good for our small country. That's why we are not going to apply all the rules, rates and so on, of goods, import and export in Mauritius and Rodrigues. That's why we need this Memorandum of Understanding. We have already signed one with the Wild Life, there is one to be signed with the National Transport Authority, the other one is going to be signed with the Ministry of Health. The legal adviser is preparing the memorandum so that we can put things right in the future.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner said that the Memorandum of Understanding will make things correct, this means that things right now are incorrect. I would like to ask him whether any employee working in the port receives any allowance from the Port Authority?

The Chief Commissioner: I need notice of the question.

RESIDENTIAL LAND LEASES - TRANSFER

(No. B/527) Mr F. Grandcourt (The First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to the transfer of residential land leases in Rodrigues, he could state the number and table the names of -

- (a) applicants awaiting for the transfer of such leases in their names;
- (b) applicants who have got residential land leases transferred in their names since the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, and
- (c) applicants whose applications have been rejected and the reasons therefor.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the names of the applicants awaiting for the transfer of a lease are being compiled and will be laid in the Library of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly when it is completed.

No residential lease has been transferred since the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Likewise, no application has been rejected as to date. Priority is being given to new applications for residential leases which are being processed in chronological order and the following order of priority –

- married applicants female and heads of households;
- single applicants older than 25 years old, and
- single applicants having less than 25 years old.

Some widows have applied to transfer the lease of their late spouses in their names. The applications are being considered as explained above and in the meantime no rent is being collected from them.

However, the said State Land Committee has been requested to give priority to needy cases. The criteria of eligibility for residential lease also applies in the case of application for transfer of leases.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Chief Commissioner said that the names are being compiled. Can we know when we will have the names of these applicants?

The Chief Commissioner: This is being compiled and it will be placed in the Library.

Mr Grandcourt: Can I ask the Chief Commissioner his general policy about transfer of lease in Rodrigues?

The Chief Commissioner: The general policy, as I said, is given priority and it all depends on the cases. There are some needy cases and there are cases that can wait. As far as any transfer of lease is concerned, there is something in the Finance Bill.

CLERK OF THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY – EXPENDITURE - RENOVATION

(No. B/528) Mr F. A. Grandcourt (First Local Region Member for La Ferme) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the quarters previously occupied by the Clerk of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly which has been demolished recently, whether he will state the amount of expenditure for all items incurred for its renovation for use by the Clerk.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that with regards to the quarters previously occupied by the Clerk of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly that the expenditure incurred for its renovation are as follows:

(a)	Materials cost	Rs 70,753.50
(b)	Labour cost	Rs 43,014.10

It is further to be noted that part of the materials used have been recovered and amounts to about Rs 33,000.00 in addition to about Rs 10,000 of materials that were present prior to renovation. The Clerk has occupied the said quarters for a period of more than 18 months. It is considered that the amount spent on the renovation is much less than what my Commission would have paid in renting a quarters for an officer of the status of a Clerk.

SCHOOL FEEDING PROJECT – BUDGET 2004/2005

(No. B/529) Mr J. Pierre Louis (Fourth Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Education whether, as regards the proposed School Feeding Project at primary level mentioned in the Budget 2004/2005, the Commissioner would inform the House of the measures he is contemplating to ensure the implementation of the project.

Mr A. L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I wish to inform the Assembly that the School Feeding Project at primary schools in Rodrigues is an ongoing project. The budget allocated for this particular vote item for the financial year 2004/2005 amounts to Rs2.2 m. and it aims at providing the pupils of the primary schools with a balanced diet on a daily basis during school days.

As regards the proposals for the financial year 2004/2005 to make available milk, eggs or local fruits to the pupils a Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of my Departmental Head to look into the purchase of same. The committee comprises the Departmental Head of the Commission of Health, a representative from Finance as well as one representative from stores. The first meeting of the committee was held on Friday, 25 June 2004. Discussions centered on the sources of availability of local fruits and buying on shelves on a pilot project basis per school.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in the meantime arrangements are being made to ensure that the pupils of the primary and pre-primary schools are catered for by a well-balanced meal on a daily basis.

TEACHERS/SENIOR TEACHERS – ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION AND DIPLOMA COURSE

(No. B/530) Mr P. Francois (First Local Region Member of Baie aux Huitres) asked the Commissioner for Education whether he could inform the House if courses have been scheduled for both primary and secondary schools teachers as regards the Advanced Certificate in Education and the Diploma Course and, if yes –

- (a) who will be those attending the different courses mentioned, and
- (b) whether there will be any kind of reward after successful completion of any course.

Mr A. L. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that registration of the participants for the two courses, viz Advanced Certificate in Education and Certificate in Educational Management have been carried out on Saturday, 19 June 2004. The Advanced Certificate in Education is meant for Teachers/Senior Teachers reckoning at least seven years post Teachers Certificate Primary whereas the Certificate in Educational Management is for the Deputy Head Teachers. These courses will officially be launched in August 2004. Some 42 participants have enrolled for the Advance Certificate in Education and 30 for the Certificate in Educational management.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, in respect of Secondary School Teachers, my Commission is in contact with the Mauritius Institute of Education for the conduct of the Teachers' Diploma Secondary and Post Graduate Certificate in Education during the next financial year.

I wish to inform the Assembly that all those who will succeed in the Advance Certificate in Education and the Certificate in Educational Management Courses, will be eligible for two increments.

CADASTRAL DEPARTMENT – PLANNING UNIT

(No. B/531) Mrs M. T. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the Cadastral Department

—

- (a) he would inform the House whether there was a Planning Unit attached to this department, and, if yes,
- (b) would he state –
 - (i) the number of officers working under that unit;
 - (ii) their respective qualifications, and
 - (iii) their terms and conditions of employment and the work they perform.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson Sir, there is no Planning Unit as such at the Cadastral Office, but a Cadet Planner is attached to that Office to deal with all town and country planning issues. With the recruitment of additional staff in the future, a Planning Unit will be created as recommended in the National Development Strategy Report. The Cadet Planner is holder of a B.A in Geography and a Master of Arts in Urban Studies. He also followed on-the-job training from 3 May 1999 to 14 July 2000 at the Ministry of Housing and Lands in Mauritius. Mr. Joseph John Frank CASIMIR was enlisted as Cadet Planner with effect from 1 September 1998 and according to the condition of his enlistment, he was to undergo on-the-job training, complete two years experience at sub professional level in work directly related to Town and Country Planning and pursue further professional studies in the field of Town and Country Planning to qualify for appointment as Town and Country Planning Officer. The officer has not been appointed Town and Country Planning Officer because the post has not been established in the Civil Establishment Order as I shall explain later on in a statement.

COMMISSIONER FOR ARTS AND CULTURE – MADAGASCAR - VISIT

(No. B/532) Mrs M. T. Meunier (The Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Arts and Culture whether, as regards her recent visit to Madagascar, she would inform the House –

- (a) from whom or which organisation she received an invitation for that visit;
- (b) the purpose of her visit there, and
- (c) the outcome of the visit.

Mrs Perrine-Begué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, regarding part (a) of the question, I was invited to Madagascar by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation Branch for the Indian Ocean region based in Madagascar and the Prime Minister's Office approved my mission as official in that country. The purpose of the visit was to participate in an intercommunal platform for

women mayors of Madagascar organised by the Malagasy Government in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

As regards part (b), to intervene on the theme, “Gender and Development in a Newly Autonomous Rodrigues.”

The new experience of Rodrigues served as a case study and an example for the newly decentralised structures of the six provinces of Madagascar. As a woman of the governing team in Rodrigues Regional Government, I shared with the women mayors the challenges of decentralised powers of decision-making and women’s involvement thereof. As for our fellow citizen, Mrs Jocelyne Minerve, she talked of her experiences in Mauritius as ex-Minister, ex-MP, former Mayor and Councillor. These two examples of different women experiences in politics in the Republic of Mauritius were welcomed by the newly elected women mayors, who were to be intronised as first Magistrates of their commune the following weekend. Our contributions were also in framing a new organisation of an association of women mayors set up during the meeting.

My personal proposals geared towards the role of the President, the funding, the quorum and the need for a Permanent Secretariat were considered favourably.

During my official visit, I met the Director General of Arts and Culture of Madagascar. I also met the executive bearers of the FEM – (*Femmes Entrepreneurs de Madagascar*) and discussed various issues of common interests between the two islands, including the possibility for commercial exchanges between women entrepreneurs, the creation of an Association of Rodrigues Women Entrepreneur which is currently in the pipeline since a number of weeks. The empowerment of Rodriguan actors, dancers and choreographers, the participation of Rodrigues in the Festival and that of Madagascar in the *Festival Créole* of Rodrigues.

May I point out, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that Rodrigues was the only Indian Ocean Island that was not represented in that international festival so far and we already discussed it with the former Minister in Mauritius last year.

There was also the question of training of Rodriguan women by specialists from Madagascar for the production of handicraft, for example,

the use of banana dried leaves. I also met with representatives of one international NGO based in Madagascar, but covering the region of Africa and Indian Ocean, as regards the funding and supporting projects against domestic violence and for the promotion of child development and security.

The two ministerial meetings scheduled on the last day of my mission were cancelled due to the rescheduling of the flights of Air Mauritius and I came back earlier.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can we know from the Commissioner who financed that visit?

Mrs Perrine-Begu : Mr Chairperson, Sir, all the costs of my participation were borne by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner said that she was invited. Can we know whether the letter of invitation was addressed to the Commissioner personally or to a woman representative from Rodrigues or both? Can we know, specifically and clearly, to whom was the invitation addressed?

Mrs Perrine-Begu : Mr Chairperson, Sir, the letter of invitation was addressed in my own name as Commissioner responsible for women in Rodrigues as well as children.

Mrs Meunier: Can we know how the experience she has gained from the visit has contributed to the daily running of the affairs at the level of the Commission here?

Mrs Perrine-Begu : Mr Chairperson, Sir, I was not there to seek for advice as to the daily running of my Commission from women mayors who have not already started their office. I was there to share Rodriguan experiences. And as regards the outcome that may come out of my mission, it relates to entrepreneurship, to the setting up of associations analogous to those in Rodrigues. We have shared experiences and expressed how Rodrigues is and the role of Rodrigues in the Indian Ocean. Now that we are autonomous, not only that, but I have also gained experiences and advice with regard to future exchanges for Rodrigues.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, relating to that visit, can we know whether any rupee has been paid to the Commissioner either by the Regional Assembly or by the Central Government in Mauritius? And if yes, what amount has been paid and for what purposes?

Mrs Perrine-Begué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there are already approved rates of per diem that are paid to any representatives and even to *les fonctionnaires*. These rates are official and they are officially published by the Government according to the number of days that are being spent there.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, my question was rather specific. I was asking whether any Government finance has been paid. She said: "yes, there is per diem". The second part of my question is: how much per day? I don't know and I want to know it on behalf of the people of Rodrigues.

Mrs Perrine-Begué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I cannot recall exactly how much it is. As I said, it is official and it can be obtained from any Commission, because it has just been approved and even modified recently by the Ministry of Finance. It can also be obtained any time from the Chief Commissioner's Office who is responsible for finance.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I don't see what is the reason behind. The Commissioner has been paid Government funds and she doesn't want to reveal it. Can we know the reason put forward to explain to this House why she cannot reveal and what funds, per diem, have been paid to her?

Mrs Perrine-Begué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I spent less than four days. The Member is an economist, so he can multiply. If I give a wrong answer to this Assembly, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this will be bad; and I do not have the exact rate. It is easy, some metres from here, the Member can go to the Central Administration and he can get the answer today itself. This is not a direct question. I could, according to the Standing Orders, even refuse to answer this question, because it is not a direct answer, it is not noted here to me. I have replied to part of the question.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner tells me to walk to the Chief Commissioner's Office to ask for the information, whereas here, in the House, the supreme body of Rodrigues - she has been on mission

in a foreign country - she does not want to reveal to us how much she has been paid per diem. I should like to ask her, Mr Chairperson, Sir...

(Interruptions)

Mrs Perrine-Begué: On a point of order, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

Mr Chairperson: Yes.

Mrs Perrine-Begué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is not correct to say that I do not want to reveal the answer. I said that I do not have the exact answer to that question. Please, rule out!

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Of course, if the Minority Leader or any Member wants to repeat an answer, that Member or the Minority Leader should be sure to repeat, at least correctly, part of the answer. But, I have something else to inform about this point. I understand that the Commissioner's response is that this has not been part of the original question. Of course, this is a reminder to what extent I have been flexible on questions, but this is not a sort of licence to go outside the questions, being given that the topic is overriding. I will not allow any more questions, except the last one from the Minority Leader about this point.

Mr J. Roussety: Mr Chairperson, Sir, regarding this visit, from a general point of view, does the Commissioner for Arts and Culture, Women Affairs and Child Development intend to respond personally in the future to every invitation sent to her Commission?

Mrs Perrine-Begué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am proud to be a representative of Rodrigues. I can tell you that what I have shared with these women will bring much more to what I have been given to bring there. So, if the Minority Leader wants to become an executive representative, he can do that. I am very proud of that and it is part and parcel of my mission, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I understand the jealousy!

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Order!

Mrs Perrine-Begué: This is my answer. Yes, I am proud of it. As far as Mauritius is concerned, they are very regularly representing Mauritius and, in fact, when Mauritius is not represented, this is being questioned in this Assembly. I thought you would be proud of that.

Mrs Meunier: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner how is she going to put the experience that she has gained from the visit, to the benefit of the Rodriguan women and children here?

Mrs Perrine-Begué: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have already answered this question. The outcome will be beneficial to Rodrigues.

NEWBORNS – HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CENTRES - DEATH

(No. B/533) Mrs M. T. Meunier (The Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner for Health whether, he would inform the House about –

- (a) the causes of the deaths of newborns in the hospitals and health centres in Rodrigues since January 2004, and
- (b) the immediate and long term measures he intends to take to reduce the number of deaths

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that there are different causes of death of newborns in Queen Elizabeth hospital and the area health centres in Rodrigues since the beginning of the year.

Deaths are attributed to the following – severely premature low birth weight babies. These babies die within one or two days after birth of complications related to acute respiratory distress syndrome. Other causes are septicaemia, the circulatory system and organs affected by bacteria. Death of newborn babies are also caused by acute pulmonary oedema and bronchiolitis with collapsed left lung.

The main problems are pre-maturity and septicaemia. Other contributing factors are of maternal origin, namely, low socio-economic status, teenage pregnancy, regular non-attendance of ante-natal clinics and some medical conditions such as severe hypertension and anaemia.

As regards part (b), my Commission is deeply concerned with this situation. Some actions have already been initiated. For example, pregnant women are motivated to attend ante-natal clinics regularly and health education of all would-be mothers is being carried out.

Arrangements are under way for the modernisation of facilities in nursery. In this respect, a number of items of equipment such as pulse oxymeters, ventilators, phototherapy unit are being processed for purchase.

Secondly, following our request to look into the matter of perinatal death, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has designated Dr.

Aumeer, gynecologist at Dr. Jeetoo Hospital, to be on a three-day mission to Rodrigues as from this morning. He will carry out an epidemiological study, that is, statistical and medical analysis with a view to identifying the causes of the increase in neonatal death rate registered as from the beginning of this year and to make recommendations to address the situation.

On receipt of the recommendations, I will make a statement on the matter.

Mrs Meunier: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards premature babies, may I know what is being done at the level of his Commission to solve the problem? The Commissioner has said that many cases of death of premature babies are being registered.

Mr Soopayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have already replied. I have just said that pregnant women are motivated to attend antenatal clinics and regular health education is carried out.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner is talking about motivating would-be mothers to attend antenatal clinics. What is the nature of this motivation?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, the nature of this motivation is to encourage would-be mothers to attend clinics.

Mr Emilien: The Commissioner mentioned that one of the reasons of death is severely premature low birth rate babies and one of the causes is that would-be mothers do not attend the antenatal clinics. The Commissioner said that he is motivating would-be mothers to attend these clinics. May I know how is he proceeding?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the *agents de santé communautaire*, the community nursing officers and midwives go around villages to motivate would-be mothers.

Mr Jabeemissar: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we all know that poor socio-economic problems prevail due to lack of employment and so on. Mr Chairperson, Sir, although one of the measures that the Commissioner mentioned is to motivate would-be mothers to follow antenatal clinics, but if the economic situation is not improving, the problem will remain the same.

I know the case of a woman whose husband does not work and who lives in very poor conditions. The mother has given birth to a baby of half a kilo. This is one among the many cases. I would like to ask the Commissioner whether his Commission intends to provide would-be mothers with the necessary food so that when they are well-fed, their babies too will be fed and they will deliver babies in good health.

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will consider the matter.

Mrs Meunier: Mr Chairperson, I wish to come back to the question of premature babies. May I know what services are being offered to premature babies at the hospital?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is purely technical.

(Interruptions)

There is a follow-up. We have got equipment.

Mr Chairperson: Will the Commissioner speak louder, please?

Mr Sooprayen: The gynaecologists, the pediatricians, the nurses are there to help and we have also the necessary equipment.

Mrs Meunier: What is being done when the babies are two or three months old? What is the follow-up offered by the Commission after the babies have left hospital?

Mr Sooprayen: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this is another question.

TAXI PERMITS - APPLICATIONS

(No. B/534) Mrs M.T. Meunier (Second Island Region Member) asked the Commissioner of Commerce whether, with regard to permits to operate taxis in Rodrigues, he would inform the House about -

- (a) the number of applicants for the period October 2002 to June 2004;

- (b) the number of applicants whose applications had been considered favourably and where they operate;
- (c) the number of applicants whose applications had not been considered favourably and the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the number of applicants whose applications still awaited consideration and when they will be considered.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that no applications for a permit to operate taxis have been received by my Commission. Permits to operate taxis in Rodrigues are dealt by the National Transport Authority Board and does not fall under my purview.

RODRIGUAN PROFESSIONAL FISHERMEN - ST BRANDON & ST RAPHAEL

(No. B/535) Mr D. L. Guillaume (Third Island Region Member) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to Rodriguan professional fishermen who fish at St Brandon and St Raphael, he could state -

- (a) how many Rodriguan fishermen had fished at these islands for the last five (5) years;
- (b) if there had been any loss of life during that period and, if yes, state the name of the victims;
- (c) if all of them were equipped with a walkie talkie; and
- (d) if they received bad weather allowance, if not, why.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, as regards part (a), I am informed by the Ministry of Fisheries that all fishers employed by the St Raphael Fishing Co. Ltd. in Mauritius to fish at St Brandon are domiciled in Mauritius, although some of them may be of Rodriguan origin or are Rodriguans.

In regard to part (b), during the last ten years, no Rodriguan as such has been reported lost in St Brandon.

As regards part (c), walkie-talkies are not used in St Brandon.

As regards part (d), the bad weather allowance is not paid to fishers working at St Brandon since they are employees of St Raphael Fishing Co.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, before going to St Brandon, the fishermen have to give back their fisherman card. But when they return from St Brandon, they do not receive the bad weather allowance because they do not possess the fisherman card. May I know if this is the case in Rodrigues?

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: This question is far from the original one. Does the Chief Commissioner have the answer to this question?

The Chief Commissioner: The question is about fishermen in St Brandon and it concerns the Ministry of Fisheries. We have received information from the Ministry. Perhaps there are regulations in Mauritius for those fishermen employed by St Raphael Fishing Co. as to whether they should be given bad weather allowance.

Mr Grandcourt: I do not know whether the Minister has got my point. After the fishermen come back from St Brandon ...

Mr Chairperson: The Member should be clear. He needs to state whether those fishermen have got cards in Rodrigues.

Mr Grandcourt: Yes. It seems that they do not receive any bad weather allowance when they come back in Rodrigues.

The Chief Commissioner: They do not receive bad weather allowance. When the fishermen come back, they have to register themselves as fishermen.

Mr Emilien: They have to start again.

The Chief Commissioner: Yes, they have to start again, because they were employed by a company. During the last visit of the Minister of Fisheries in Rodrigues, we have talked about those fishermen going abroad and coming back to Rodrigues. Concerning the bad weather allowance, we have made some proposals as to whether we can give them a fisherman card

after they return to Rodrigues. We are awaiting a reply from the Ministry of Fisheries. They are experienced fishermen who were fishing in the high seas in St Brandon and I think that when they come back, they should automatically get a fisherman card, but they should have a fishing boat. This question has been discussed with the Minister of Fisheries.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, before the Rodriguan fishermen went to St Brandon, they had their fisherman card. But what happens when they return from St Brandon?

The Chief Commissioner: It is not only for fishermen going to St Brandon, but it concerns also fishermen who go to Mauritius and they have stopped their activities in Rodrigues. They should write to the Fisheries Department here and say the reasons as to why they have gone to Mauritius. For those who have been to prison at Pointe La Gueule, we have decided that they can be given back their fisherman card. But it all depends on the reason as to why they have left Rodrigues to go either to Mauritius or St Brandon. If the fishermen had their fisherman card and had stopped their activities here to be employed by a company in Mauritius, they need to have a new card when they come back.

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I understand that if a fisherman goes to Mauritius or to jail, he has interrupted his economic activities. But if he goes to St Brandon, we all know that he is not going for a picnic there. The authorities can check it and they should automatically get back their fisherman card. Will the Chief Commissioner look into the matter?

The Chief Commissioner: Usually, there is a registration card given to them when they are employed by St Raphael Fishing Co., and when they come back, they submit the card to us. We also ask information from the management of the company so that they can give us more information about the fishermen working in their company.

Mr Chairperson: Last supplementary, please!

Mr Grandcourt: Mr Chairperson, Sir, there are cases in Rodrigues where fishermen have returned from St Brandon and they have not received any allowance, even though, they have their card. Will the Chief Commissioner look into these cases?

The Chief Commissioner: As I say, we are looking into those cases and we are waiting for some information from the Ministry of Fisheries in Mauritius. As you know, in the past, before the setting up of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, there has been a report and this question to whom we must give the fishermen card is being considered by my Commission.

FARMERS - VETERINARY SERVICES

(No. B/536) Mr D. L. Guillaume (Third Island Region Member) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner whether, with regard to difficulties faced by farmers to obtain veterinary services, he could state -

- (a) how many permanent vans were attached to the veterinary department;
- (b) if there was a lack of drugs and equipment in this department and, if yes,
- (c) what action was being taken to remedy this situation.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that, with regard to the veterinary services -

- (a) only 1 4 x 4 double cab van is attached to the services;
- (b) presently there is no lack of commonly used veterinary drugs and equipment in the service.
- (c) I am, further, informed that a sufficient amount of drugs is now available for breeders and necessary equipment is available at the disposal of the veterinary officer and staff.

HANDBALL PITCHES - COST, DATE OF CONSTRUCTION, ETC.

(No. B/537) Mr A. L. Emilien (Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Youth and Sports as regards the practice of handball in Rodrigues, whether he would state -

- (a) the number of handball pitches or sports complexes where handball can be practised throughout the island;
- (b) the cost of each handball pitch and their respective date of construction;
- (c) whether the existing pitches are according to normal standards; and
- (d) the number of licencees presently registered.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the information is as follows -

- (a) Handball is being practiced at Malabar gymnasium, at Grande Montagne sport complexes and on some other volleyball and basketball pitches.
- (b) One handball pitch was constructed at Trèfles. The contract was awarded on 15 January 2001 and work was completed on 30 March 2001.
- (c) The pitch meets the required standard.
- (d) Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is to be noted that it is not always possible and suitable to convert existing pitches where handball is being practised. However, the Regional Government is coming up with two new projects, which will be of standard conditions for the practice of handball, namely, one gymnasium at Grande Montagne and a handball pitch at Nassola.
- (e) At present, there are about 170 licencees registered with the Handball Regional Committee.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it seems to me that part (b) of the question has not been answered by the Commissioner concerning the cost of each handball pitch.

Mr Lisette: The pitch which was constructed at Trèfles cost Rs388,667 plus VAT.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner mentioned Malabar, La Ferme and other regions and now he is giving the cost only for Trèfles. Can I know from the Commissioner why we do not have the cost of the other pitches, please?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the question relates to a pitch which has been built specifically for handball. The other pitches that have been mentioned were meant for other activities. Nevertheless, for the time being, handball is being practised on these pitches.

Mr Emilien: The Commissioner just informed the House, Mr Chairperson, Sir, that the pitch at Trèfles meets the required standards. Is the Commissioner aware that the DTN, Mr Renaud Fabre, was recently in Rodrigues and that he stated that not a single pitch meets the required standards? Is it true?

Mr Lisette: When I say 'required standard', Mr Chairperson, Sir, I was referring to the sites of the handball pitch.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it seems that the Commissioner has taken us for a ride! When we talk about 'required standard', it means a pitch where sport activities can be practised according to international norms.

Mr Chairperson: This is a sort of very obscure question. The Commissioner has replied that the sizes are normal and the Member is stating something that has been said by somebody else. Unless the Member comes with proof he can sustain what is the difference in sizes. The Member should come up with tangible evidence.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, I am asking the Commissioner if he is aware that Mr Fabre, the DTN, who has got experience.

Mr Chairperson: This is where the Member has to be specific, because there is some obscurity where you refer to sizes, amenities or length. If Mr Fabre said that the land is not good, the Member has to say so, so that the Commissioner can get your question right.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do not recall the dimension at hand. But I think that the Commissioner should have at least this information. I would like to know from him if it is true to say that the pitch at Trèfles meets the required standards.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as per the information provided to me, the volleyball pitch at Trèfles is 43 metres by 23.5 metres.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I do not know if the Commissioner is mistaken. Is he talking about volleyball pitch?

Mr Lisette: I am talking of handball pitch.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to ask the Commissioner whether the playing fields for handball which are found at La Ferme and Mangue are according to the required norms.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I said in my answer that even though these fields are not according to norms, but still handball is being practised on them.

Mr Grandcourt: Can I ask the Commissioner whether these pitches are marked for handball?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we have to be very careful because whenever we refer to a particular pitch there are many activities that may be practised on it. If we are going to mark it for each and every discipline, it may cause some problems. So, we have to be very careful about this.

Mr Emilien: May we know from the Commissioner how many pitches are marked in Rodrigues for each activity?

Mr Lisette: There is one pitch that is marked at Trèfles.

Mr Agathe: The Commissioner, Mr Chairperson, Sir, just said that even though the pitches are not according to norms, handball is practised. Est-ce-que c'est une pratique normale de continuer à pratiquer sur un terrain qui ne correspond pas aux normes indiquées? Est-ce-que la Commission a un plan pour agrandir ce terrain pour qu'il corresponde aux normes internationales?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I stated in my answer that we are coming with two new projects, that is, a handball pitch and a gymnasium of standard sizes.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I welcome this initiative of building new pitches soon. But what about the existing ones? Will they stay as they are, that is, not according to normal standards?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have stated in my answer that it may not be suitable as per available of space within the pitch. We may not have available space for lengthening. But it is in our policy, Mr Chairperson, Sir, with respect to handball, that we are going to build in the coming years new handball pitches around the island to satisfy the demand.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, is the Commissioner aware that especially in the north of Rodrigues, we have a team called Costa Rangers who is playing on a car park?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have stated that it is our policy to come up with new handball pitches in each and every region to meet the demand that our handball players are expecting.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has not replied to my question. Is he aware of the situation for the team?

Mr Lisette: So far, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have not been informed of this situation in writing.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, it is surprising to note that we have only a normal handball pitch at Trèfles and in that region we have only one team which is called Grande Montagne Handball Club and in the west, at Corail and Mangue, they both have feminine teams and they do not have any handball pitch to play.

Mr Chairperson: What is your question?

Mr Agathe: Is it a form of *boycottage* towards the persons of these regions?

Mr Chairperson: This is not allowed. Let us move to next question.

HEALTH SERVICES - EQUIPMENT

(No. B/538) Mr A. L. Emilien (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner of Health as regards the supply of equipment to the Health Services in Rodrigues, would he inform the House -

- (a) whether all equipment required by the Health Services in Rodrigues for the last 12 months had been issued and if not, state the equipment not issued and the reasons therefor;
- (b) what measures his Commission had taken or is contemplating regarding equipment not supplied so far, if any, and
- (c) whether there had been any serious consequences on the smooth running of the Health Services in Rodrigues due to lack of equipment during the period stated above.

Mr Sooprayen: M. le président, permettez moi de faire ressortir à la Chambre que quelques semaines après que le gouvernement régional a été mis en place, la commission de la santé a fait un *survey* pour voir l'état de situation des équipements. Parfois la procédure pour l'achat des équipements est longue, surtout quand ces équipements viennent de plusieurs pays.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, equipment required by the Health Services for the last 12 months in Rodrigues are as follows -

- gastroscope for operation theatre - it is already here and it comes from Germany;
- Automatic X-Ray film processor for X-Ray department at Queen Elizabeth hospital; it is here and it comes from South Africa;
- 1 unique anaesthetic machine with ventilator for operating theatre - already bought; it is at Port Louis and will come by the next boat. It was bought in Denmark;
- 1-unit voltage stabilizer, 1 coagulometer, 1 bench top centrifuge and refrigerated centrifuge for Laboratory.
- 1 dental unit, already bought and is actually in Port Louis. It is coming soon for La Ferme
- 3 sterilisers - already in use; 1 at Queen Elizabeth hospital, 1 at Mont Lubin Area Health Centre and 1 at La Ferme Area Health Centre

- 2 compressors - 1 for La Ferme and 1 for Queen Elizabeth hospital- already bought and are at present in Port Louis, are coming by the next boat.

All the equipment I just mentioned have reached either Mauritius or are already in Rodrigues with the exception of the bench-top centrifuge and refrigerated centrifuge for which approval of the Central Tender Board has been sought on 16 June 2004. Tenders floated by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life.

(b) With regard to equipment not supplied so far such as the refrigerated centrifuge we have to await, as I just said, the approval of the CTB. It has been the practice so far that we request the supplier to send the equipment by airfreight.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, may I inform this House that most medical equipment are not kept in stock by the manufacturers due to rapid innovation in the field of medical technology. In fact, the manufacturer starts assembly of components upon confirmation of order and delivery up to Mauritius naturally takes some time.

The services have not been affected so far. The laboratory equipment which are expected to be in Rodrigues within three months will be used for the provision of a new service, that is, the provision of fresh frozen plasma, platelet concentrates and red cell concentrates...

(Interruptions)

I know exactly what I am saying. I can explain because you have got blood coming. When you take your blood, you have to divide into three and then you analyse which part the patient requires such as frozen plasma, which part he requires for platelet concentrates and which part he requires for red cell concentrates in the whole blood. Actually this is being done in Mauritius as I have just said, there will be this new service soon.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the Commissioner has mentioned automatic film processor which has been bought and which is presently in Rodrigues. I am very happy for this purchase. I would like to know if the Commissioner is aware - we are talking of equipment coming from abroad which needs a lot of procedures which take time, we all know that...

Mr Sooprayen: I have just said, it takes a long time to get the equipment. Déjà on avait fait venir ici le Dr. Shiva, who is an Adviser in bio-medical engineer. He made a visit here some time ago and we have already thought about it.

Mr Emilien: Mr Commissioner is talking about delay, but a TV monitor is a very simple device that can be bought locally. Does he have at his Commission a normal TV screen to be connected to a fluorescent screen so that the technician can see where to take films exactly, for example, in certain tests as barium swallow....

(Interruptions)

Mr Sooprayen: I will look into the matter, Sir.

PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS - PRICE

(No. B/539) Mr A.L. Emilien (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Health in respect of public pharmacy in Rodrigues, he would state -

- (a) whether there had been any application, if any, and the name of all the applicants;
- (b) the date of submission of each application, if any, and the name of all the applicants;
- (c) what actions had been taken or envisaged by his Commission in respect of these applicants, and
- (d) why the decrease in price of medicine as a consequence of budgetary measures taken by the Central Government had not been applied so far by the only public pharmacy of the island.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to reply to this question.

I have been informed that no application to run a pharmacy in Rodrigues has been received. As a consequence, parts (b) and (c) become void.

Concerning part (d), I have further been informed that so far there has been no decrease in prices of pharmaceutical products even in Mauritius

following the budgetary measures. Reduction in prices will apply to new consignments of medicine imported after 11 June 2004. Pharmacy owners have stated that their old stock would last for some three months.

Mr Emilien: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can I ask the Commissioner if at his Commission, there is a sort of monitoring unit to see whether new consignments have arrived and they still apply old prices as far as medicine is concerned?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, we do have a Consumer Protection Office which deals with control of prices within the island.

POULTRY DISEASE - OUTBREAK

(No. B/540) Mr A.L. Emilien (First Local Region Member for Maréchal) asked the Commissioner for Trade and Commerce whether, as regards the recent outbreak of disease among poultry at Ilot in Mauritius, he could inform the House -

- (a) what control his Commission had exercised over the import of frozen chicken since the beginning of 2004 to prevent the arrival of contaminated chicken on the local market;
- (b) what had been the outcome of these measures, if any;
- (c) had there been any case reported to his Commission either by the public or by officers of the Health and Sanitary Department, and
- (d) had there been a sort of monitoring committee to act as *chien de garde* for the safety and health of the public in that case.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, following the recent problem of Trois Ilots farm, all suspected poultry carcasses from the batches concerned were removed from the sale points across Mauritius and detained under seal by the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life. The poultry carcasses are still under detention. The Division of Veterinary Services in Mauritius is regularly monitoring the health status of all industrial poultry farms. So far, the Veterinary Service is not aware of any incident similar to that of Trois Ilots.

As regards Rodrigues, no case has been reported so far. Furthermore, I have been informed by the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life that the incriminated batches of poultry at Trois Ilots bearing Lot Nos. 2956, 2957

and 2958 were not sent to Rodrigues. The Health Inspectorate in Rodrigues was requested to report about any abnormal death of poultry and up to date no adverse report has been obtained.

Mr Emilien: Sir, the Commissioner is mentioning that the poultry carcasses were taken out of the market in Mauritius. This is a case that has been known to the public, but it may be that there are cases unknown to the public. Is there a sort of committee at sanitary level to have an eye on the frozen foods coming from Mauritius or abroad and whether there exists any danger for the consumers in Rodrigues?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as you can see from the answer that I gave, the question of monitoring is being done at source. We have the Veterinary Officers, the Sanitary Officers from the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life who are monitoring all poultry carcasses which are coming on the market in Mauritius.

Mr Emilien: May I ask the Commissioner whether he is satisfied with the control effected at source?

Mr Lisette: So far, Mr Chairperson, Sir, as I have mentioned, there is no complaint. I can say that I am satisfied with the control being effected.

"ROUTE DE L'AUTONOMIE" - BAIE LASCARS/MONT LUBIN - PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

(No. B/541) Mr J. Roussety (Minority Leader) asked the Deputy Chief Commissioner as regards the "*Route de l'Autonomie*" from Baie Lascars junction to Mont Lubin whether he would -

- (a) state the number of pedestrian crossings; if any, that existed along that road and the number of traffic signs warning pedestrians of such crossings, and
- (b) consider placing pedestrian crossings at the following places: hospital bus stop (contour Merla), Roseaux bus stop and at the level of the lateral road leading to Vangar.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed that, with regard to the "*Route de l'Autonomie*" from Baie Lascars

junction to Mont Lubin, no pedestrian crossing exists along that portion of road.

At the Road Safety Committee of 11 June 2004, a decision was taken to place pedestrian crossing at several places along the road, namely at contour Merla, junction at Roseaux Road, contour Kiosk and Mont Lubin. A technical team comprising the Public Infrastructure Commission, the Police and the Engineer of the Traffic Management Unit has visited the site and has been requested to submit recommendations as to the appropriate location with due regard to the safety of both pedestrians and the road users.

Meanwhile, I am informed that policemen are present at peak hours during school days at Vanguard, Roseaux and Port Mathurin entrance to help pedestrians cross the road.

RECEPTIONS, COCKTAILS ETC. - DETAILED BREAKDOWN

(No. B/542) Mr J. Roussety (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether he will, for the information of the House, give a detailed breakdown of all cocktails, receptions and dinners partly or wholly financed out of Rodrigues Regional Assembly Funds since 01 July 2003 indicating the date, the location, the purpose and the amount disbursed or billed for each event.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the information is being compiled and will be laid in the Library of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mr J. Roussety: Can we expect to have the information, Sir, within one month?

The Chief Commissioner: Sir, the information is being compiled by the Chief Finance Officer, asking for information from different Commissions. I think we should have this information by next week or before the next sitting.

Mr J. Roussety: Thank you. I will be waiting for the information.

RODRIGUES FOOTBALL TEAM - SETTING UP

(No. B/543) Mr J. Roussety (Minority Leader) asked the Commissioner for Youth & Sports as regards the setting up of the Rodrigues Football Team (Rodrigues Selection), whether he would -

- (a) state since when the team had been set up;
- (b) state who was the appointed trainer, what were his qualifications and experience, and what were the conditions attached to this appointment;
- (c) state how the selection of players had been carried out, and
- (d) what facilities had been offered to the players and officials.

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, as regards part (a), the Rodrigues Football Team was set up in March 2004.

With regard to part (b), the Rodrigues Football Team is under the coaching of Mr Raphaël Spéville. He was appointed by the Rodrigues Regional Football Committee and holds a *brevet d'état général* level 2 specific in football. He has also followed coaching run by the Confédération de Football in Mauritius in 1999 and he has also coached several teams in Rodrigues.

In regard to part (c), the Rodrigues Regional Football Committee has agreed to refund to Mr Spéville all his travelling expenses met during selection and training sessions.

As for part (d) selections of players for second and classified teams were done in different zones. First Division Teams were then requested to send their three most valuable players. A total of 40 players were pre-selected, which was then finally reduced to 22.

The following facilities were provided to the players and officials -

- (i) refunding of the transport after training sessions;
- (ii) a light packed lunch after training sessions;
- (iii) sports equipment including trousers, shoes and tracksuits.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I want to ask the Commissioner whether the Rodriguan footballers who are in Mauritius have had the opportunity to take part in the pre-selection?

Mr Lisette: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I think this is a technical aspect of the matter because the selection was to be done by a coach. I think the coach himself knows from a technical aspect whether to include players from Mauritius or not.

Mr Agathe: Can we know whether the appointed trainer is alone or he is assisted by another person?

Mr Lisette: For the time being, Mr Chairperson, Sir, the coach is being voluntarily assisted by Mr Maxi Ravina from Lataniers Sporting Club.

Mr Agathe: Mr Chairperson, Sir, can the Commissioner table the list of players who have been selected? Can we know also from which team they come?

Mr Lisette: Yes, Sir, I'll do the needful.

TV EMISSIONS - INTERRUPTION - 20.06.04

(No. B/544) Mr J. Roussety (Minority Leader) asked the Chief Commissioner whether, as regards the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) TV programmes in Rodrigues and in the interest of the public and TV viewers, he will kindly -

- (a) request information from the Corporation as to why there had been a prolonged interruption of TV emissions on Sunday 20 June 2004, and
- (b) inquire whether such problems had recurred after the above date and the reasons therefor and measures envisaged to prevent such interruptions.

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am informed by the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation that radio and television transmission in Mauritius and Rodrigues fall under the responsibility of the Multi-Carrier (Mtius) Ltd. and that according to information gathered from MBC Station

in Rodrigues, there was a power cut between 7.30 a.m. and 15 hours at Mont Vénus on 20 June 2004.

According to the Central Electricity Board, there was a pre-arranged power cut on 20 June 2004 in the region of Mont Vénus for maintenance works. A similar problem occurred on 24 June 2004 from 16.46 hours to 20.48 hours due to an unforeseen power cut caused by fault on CEB network which affected the network from Mont Vénus to Pointe Cotton.

Mr Chairperson: Next item, please.

STATEMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

REGISTRATION & TRANSCRIPTION OF DEEDS & INSCRIPTION OF MORTGAGES, PRIVILEGES & CHARGES (RODRIGUES) ACT - AMENDMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I have three statements to make. With your permission, I would like to make the following statement with regard to the proposed amendment to the Registration and Transcription of Deeds and Inscription of Mortgages, Privileges and Charges (Rodrigues) Act mentioned by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in the Budget Speech 2004-2005.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, more than 20 months have elapsed since the advent of the Regional Assembly. During this period, this august Assembly has passed two regulations for the imposition of licence fees and approved not less than three Budgets, the latter being focused mainly on the allocation and use of financial resources made available by the Central Government.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, the responsibility of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is wide encompassing. Autonomy also involves the creation and collection of revenues. It is becoming more and more necessary to raise revenue to finance public expenditure in the island. On the other hand, each year, there is an increasing demand from the population for the provision of better services in all sectors ranging from public utilities to economic and social services. In no uncertain terms, section 50 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, which was subsequently amended by the Finance Act 2002 provides that -

"All fees, dues, rates or other charges in respect of any economic activity in Rodrigues shall be administered in Rodrigues on behalf of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and all receipts from public utilities or public services in Rodrigues shall be paid into the Rodrigues Consolidated Fund."

Even though authority to levy certain category of fees has been bestowed exclusively upon this Assembly (*vide* Sections 26 and 31 of the RRA Act), yet levy of duties and taxes remains within the purview of the Central Government under the present legislation. Moreover, duties and taxes collected by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly have to be paid into the Consolidated Fund in Mauritius.

We welcome the proposals made by the Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Finance in his Budget Speech 2004/2005, I quote –

“To enable the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to raise more of its own funds, Government will amend the Registration and Transcription of Deeds and Inscription of Mortgages, Privileges and Charges (Rodrigues) Act. It will provide for the proceeds thereof to be credited to the Rodrigues Consolidated Fund.”

Mr Chairperson, Sir, before finalising the proposed amendments, a number of legal, operational and administrative issues will have to be considered. To this end, working sessions will be held between the Ministry of Finance, the State Law Office and my office in the course of the year.

Actually, except for the stamp duty, no registration duties or fees are leviable in Rodrigues. It is implicit, therefore, that what is being contemplated is, in fact, the levy of duty or fees upon registration of documents as it is done in Mauritius.

We believe that the levy of rates at the same percentage as in Mauritius would not be fair all of a sudden, and this is not consistent with our policy. Furthermore, as no decision having been taken regarding the rates of fees to be levied, I will be having prior consultations with all stakeholders and we will seek the approval of this Assembly by way of a motion in due course.

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY – PUBLIC OFFICERS

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to inform the Assembly that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act has been amended to confer the status of public officers to the employees on the establishment of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Amendment) Bill has been passed in the National Assembly on Tuesday 15 June 2004. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs & Administrative Reforms and the Ministry of Shipping, Rodrigues & Outer Islands have initiated action for the posts on the establishment of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to appear in the Civil Establishment Order 2004.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, prior to the advent of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001, all employees of the Central Administration, Rodrigues, were public officers. When the new decentralised administration system was implemented in October 2002, some problems cropped up, as some clauses of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act were not clear on the status of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly employees.

In the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, only the posts of Island Chief Executive and Departmental Heads have been specifically described as public officers. There is ambiguity for all the other posts on our establishment, as the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has been created as a body corporate. After consultations, the Solicitor General's Office advised that an amendment be brought to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001, in order that officers of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly be deemed to be public officers.

Following concerted discussions between representatives of the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs & Administrative Reforms, the Public Service Commission, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the State Law Office and the Ministry of Shipping, Rodrigues & Outer Islands, amendments have been finalised.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, this amendment is very important for the following reasons –

There has been disruption in the recruitment for the new and additional posts created in the two Budgets, approved by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for financial year 2002/2003 and financial year 2003/2004. As these posts have not been established in the Civil

Establishment Order, this has caused and is still causing major frustration in the administration of the island, as the Commissions are understaffed, and the necessary staff structure cannot be implemented for lack of qualified and experienced officers.

It has not been possible for the Public Service Commission to recruit staff for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Even the administrative decision to recruit officers on a contract basis has not yielded the required results. The advice tendered by the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs & Administrative Reforms to the effect that, meanwhile, assignment of duties for promotional posts be given, has been made effective by both the Public Service Commission and the Rodrigues Administration.

The amendment will now enable the Ministry of Civil Affairs & Administrative Reforms to include all posts of the Regional Assembly in the Civil Establishment Order, thus eliminating the problems being encountered for recruitment of staff.

Employees of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly have always remained public officers with all the acquired rights remaining as is.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, upon receipt of the Civil Establishment Order 2004, reports of vacancies will be submitted to the Public Service Commission to finalise the appointments, promotions kept pending.

RODRIGUES BUDGET - APPROVAL

Mr Chairperson, Sir, with your permission, I would like to inform the House that the Budget has been approved at Committee Stage on Thursday 24 June 2004 and that, today, the Appropriation Bill will be presented for third reading and approval by the National Assembly.

In the name of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and in my own name, I wish to place on record our thanks to the Government of Mauritius for having approved all provisions applied for by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the next financial year. Therefore, the contribution of the Government of Mauritius to the Rodrigues Consolidated Fund is Rs790,581,000 for the Recurrent Budget and Rs427 m. for Capital Expenditure.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for your attention.

REFLECTORISED ROAD SIGNS

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I would like to make a short statement with regard to the quotations launched by my Commission for the reflectorised road signs.

Quotations were invited from 11 suppliers from Mauritius and Rodrigues for the supply of 161 reflectorised road signs, with respective galvanised poles and fittings.

Quotations were launched on 25 February 2004 with the closing date set on 23 March 2004. On the closing date, only three quotations were obtained, namely from Moosun Signs Ltd, Rodrigues Speed Design and Prosec Ltd.

A technical committee, comprising the trainee engineer, a technical officer and an inspector of works, was set up to evaluate the quotation. The committee has recommended that the contract be awarded to Prosec Ltd, who has submitted the lowest compliant offer for the sum of Rs373,850.

Several clarifications were requested from the supplier, to ensure that the signs to be supplied meet all the specifications as requested in the quotation.

On 26 May 2004, the quotation was awarded to the firm. The delivery period is one month. The contractor has requested for an extension of the delivery period to mid July due to delay in boat schedule. All the road signs will then be installed, after delivery, all over the island where need be.

Thank you for your attention, Mr Chairperson, Sir.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 20 July 2004 at 10.30 a.m.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

At 1.35 the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 20 July 2004 at 10.30 a.m.